



WESTHOUGHTON URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT

of the

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

for

1948.

PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT,
WESTHOUGHTON.

August, 1949.

PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT,
TOWN HALL,
WESTHOUGHTON.

August, 1949.

To the Chairman and Members of
the Health Committee.

I beg to submit the Annual Report upon the Health of the District for the year 1948.

It follows similar lines to those of the immediately previous years in conformity with the recommendations of the Ministry of Health.

I am,

Yours faithfully,

E. TAYLOR,

Medical Officer of Health.

AREA OF THE DISTRICT - 5,560 acres.
CENSUS POPULATION, 1931 - 16,018.
ESTIMATED POPULATION 1948 - 14,940.
NUMBER OF INHABITED HOUSES AT END OF YEAR - 4,553.

VITAL STATISTICS

		Total	M.	F.		
Live	Legitimate	224	112	112		
Births	Illegitimate	3	1	2	Birthrate per 1,000 estimated population mid-1948.	15.1
	Total	227	113	114		
Stillbirths		5	2	3	Rate per 1,000 total (live & still)births	21.0
Deaths		170	88	82	Deathrate per 1,000 estimated population	11.3

Deaths from puerperal causes.

	Deaths	Deathrate per 1,000 total (live & still) births.
Puerperal & post-abortive sepsis	Nil	Nil
Other maternal causes	Nil	Nil
Total	Nil	Nil

Deathrate of Infants under one year of age.

All infants per 1,000 live births	17
Legitimate infants per 1,000 legitimate live births	17
Illegitimate infants per 1,000 illegitimate live births	Nil
Deaths from Cancer (all ages)	28
Deaths from Measles " "	1
Deaths from Whooping Cough (all ages)	-
Deaths from Diarrhoea (under 2 years of age)	-

Population for Birth-rate & Death-rate - 14,940.

Per 1,000 of estimated population					
	Live Birth rate	Crude Death rate	Deathrate from Tuberculosis of respiratory system	Deathrate from Cancer	Rate of deaths under 1 yr per 1,000 live births
Mean of 5 years 1943 - 1947	17.1	12.5	0.20	1.57	48
1947	17.9	12.0	0.13	1.40	44
1948	15.1	11.3	0.20	1.87	17
Increase or decrease in 1948 on :-					
(1) 5 yrs average 1943 - 1947	- 2.0	- 1.2	Nil	+ 0.30	- 31
(2) Previous year	- 2.8	- 0.7	+ 0.07	+ 0.47	- 27
Maternal Mortality Rate					
	per 1,000 live births	per 1,000 total (live & still) births			
Mean of 5 yrs. 1943 - 1947	4.20	4.02			
1947	Nil	Nil			
1948	Nil	Nil			
Increase or decrease in 1948 on :-					
(1) 5 yrs average 1943 - 1947	- 4.20	- 4.02			
(2) previous year	Nil	Nil			

The birth-rate (15.1) during the year reached the lowest level since 1941 and was well below the rate for England & Wales (17.9) although it was more satisfactory than any period since 1926 apart from the war and post war years.

The death-rate (11.3) compared with a rate for England & Wales (10.8) was the lowest since 1937.

Two very pleasing features of the statistical return are the lowest ever Infantile Mortality Rate of 17 (i.e. deaths of infants under 1 year per 1,000 live births) compared with a rate of 34 for England & Wales and the fact that no mother died from any cause associated with giving birth to her baby.

WATER SUPPLY.

The District is supplied with water by Bolton Corporation, which is filtered and treated before going into supply. All dwelling-houses are supplied direct from the mains. Frequent chemical and bacteriological examinations are made by Bolton Corporation. Three examinations were made of the water as received at terminal points in the area.

No. of bacteriological examinations 3 Result - Satisfactory

No. of chemical examinations 3 Result - Satisfactory

No action was necessary in respect of any form of contamination.
No liability to plumbo-solvent action.

It is therefore clear that the quality of the water available to the District is all that can be desired, but particularly during the summer months considerable concern was felt on account of the quantity of water available in those areas of the town which are elevated - e.g. Hilton House, Fourgates and Snydale. An increase in water consumption had been foreseen by the Council and an agreement with Bolton Corporation for an additional main supply already initiated. The work of laying a new 12" diameter water main from Bolton is in progress which will permit of an increased supply from 400,000 to 600,000 gallons of water per day. The Consultant Engineer has submitted his preliminary report and has been instructed to proceed with the preparation of a detailed scheme which provides for the construction of a new reservoir with a capacity of 1,000,000 gallons and the laying of the necessary distribution mains.

DRAINAGE

There have been no important extensions or alterations in the general scheme.

HOUSING

In common with surrounding areas, lack of houses is of paramount importance. There were, at the end of the year, 465 names on the Council's list of applicants and of these about 268 were living in lodgings.

Number of new houses erected during the year :-

	Prefabricated houses		Traditional permanent houses
	Temporary	Permanent	
(i) By the local authority	-	-	56
(ii) By other local authorities	-	-	Nil
(iii) By other bodies or persons	-	-	2

There were in the course of erection on Hindleys Estate No. 5. 54 houses and 8 bungalows, and at Daisy Hill 44 three-bedroomed houses. A further 54 houses are contemplated on the Townsfield Estate and 6 additional houses on Hindleys Estate No. 5.

SANITARY INSPECTIONS

A total of 3,797 premises were visited and 965 defects or nuisances discovered, necessitating the serving of 337 Informal Notices and 35 Statutory Notices. It was not found necessary to institute legal proceedings.

Inspection of dwelling-houses during the year :-

Total number of dwelling-houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts.)	218
Number of inspections made for the purpose	1308
Number of dwelling-houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation	-
Number of dwelling-houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-head) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation	218

Remedy of defects during the year without service of formal notices:-

Number of defective dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the local authority 151

Action under statutory powers during the year.

1. Proceedings under sections 9, 10 and 16 of the Housing Act, 1936.

Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs 13

Number of dwelling-houses which were rendered fit after service of formal notices:

(a) By owners 10
(b) By local authority in default of owners -

2. Proceedings under Public Health Acts.

Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied 22

Number of dwelling-houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notices:

(a) By owners 18
(b) By local authority in default of owners -

INFESTATION

Seven houses were found infested with bed bugs of which five were disinfested by use of insecticide (5% D.D.T. spray) and two with H.C.N.

FOOD INSPECTION

The 74 producer-retailers of milk in the town have been regularly inspected and the milk examined for bacteriological cleanliness. A total of 204 samples were submitted for examination for the presence of Tubercle Bacilli - 10 were confirmed as positive and the necessary action completed by the Ministry of Agriculture's Veterinary Inspector. Of a further 193 samples taken, 143 attained the accredited milk standard and 50 were unsatisfactory.

Raw cow's milk is obviously not a safe food for children and should always be boiled before consumption.

The increased supply of heat treated (pasteurised) and/or Tuberculin Tested milk is to be welcomed.

FACTORIES ACT, 1937.

Inspections for purposes of provisions as to health.

Premises	No. on register	Inspections	Notices
1. Factories in which Sections 1,2,3, 4 and 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities	2	6	-
2. Factories not included in (1) in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority	59	122	-
3. Other Premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding out-workers' premises)	3	6	-
Total	64	134	-

Cases in which defects were found.

Particulars	Number of cases in which defects were found			
	Found	Remedied	To H.M. Inspector	Referred By H.M. Inspector
Want of cleanliness	-	-	-	-
Overcrowding	-	-	-	-
Unreasonable temperature	-	-	-	-
Inadequate ventilation	-	-	-	-
Ineffective drainage of floors	-	-	-	-
Sanitary Conveniences				
(a) insufficient	2	-	-	-
(b) unsuitable or defective	3	2	-	1
(c) not separate for sexes	-	-	-	-
Other offences against the Act	-	-	-	-
Total	5	2	-	1

There are no Outworkers employed in the District.

AMBULANCE SERVICE

The Ambulance Service functioned satisfactorily and was transferred to the Lancashire County Council on July 5th. The Ambulance made 246 journeys as follows :-

<u>Bolton</u>	<u>Wigan</u>	<u>Manchester</u>	<u>Miscellaneous</u>	<u>Total</u>
219	9	7	11	246

NATIONAL ASSISTANCE ACT, 1948.

No action was necessary under Section 47 of this Act.

INFECTIOUS DISEASE

Food Poisoning

No cases of food poisoning were notified.

Scarlet Fever

During the year 44 cases of Scarlet Fever were notified and of these it was necessary to treat 19 in hospital on account of reasons of public health. The disease continued to be mild with few complications and no deaths.

Diphtheria

Two cases of Diphtheria were notified - one was in an adult who had a fairly severe attack and the other in a child aged 8 years, previously immunised in infancy. Both made complete recoveries.

Measles

A further epidemic of Measles occurred during the latter portion of the year 232 cases being notified. The disease was of a mild type with few complications but one infant died in hospital from broncho pneumonia.

IMMUNISATION

Special sessions for Diphtheria Immunisation were held at the Westhoughton School Clinic and the Day Schools.

The number of children immunised up to July 5th were:-

Pre-school children	-	96
School children	-	3
Reinforcing doses	-	17

The immunisation state of child population at the end of the year was :-

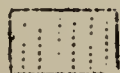
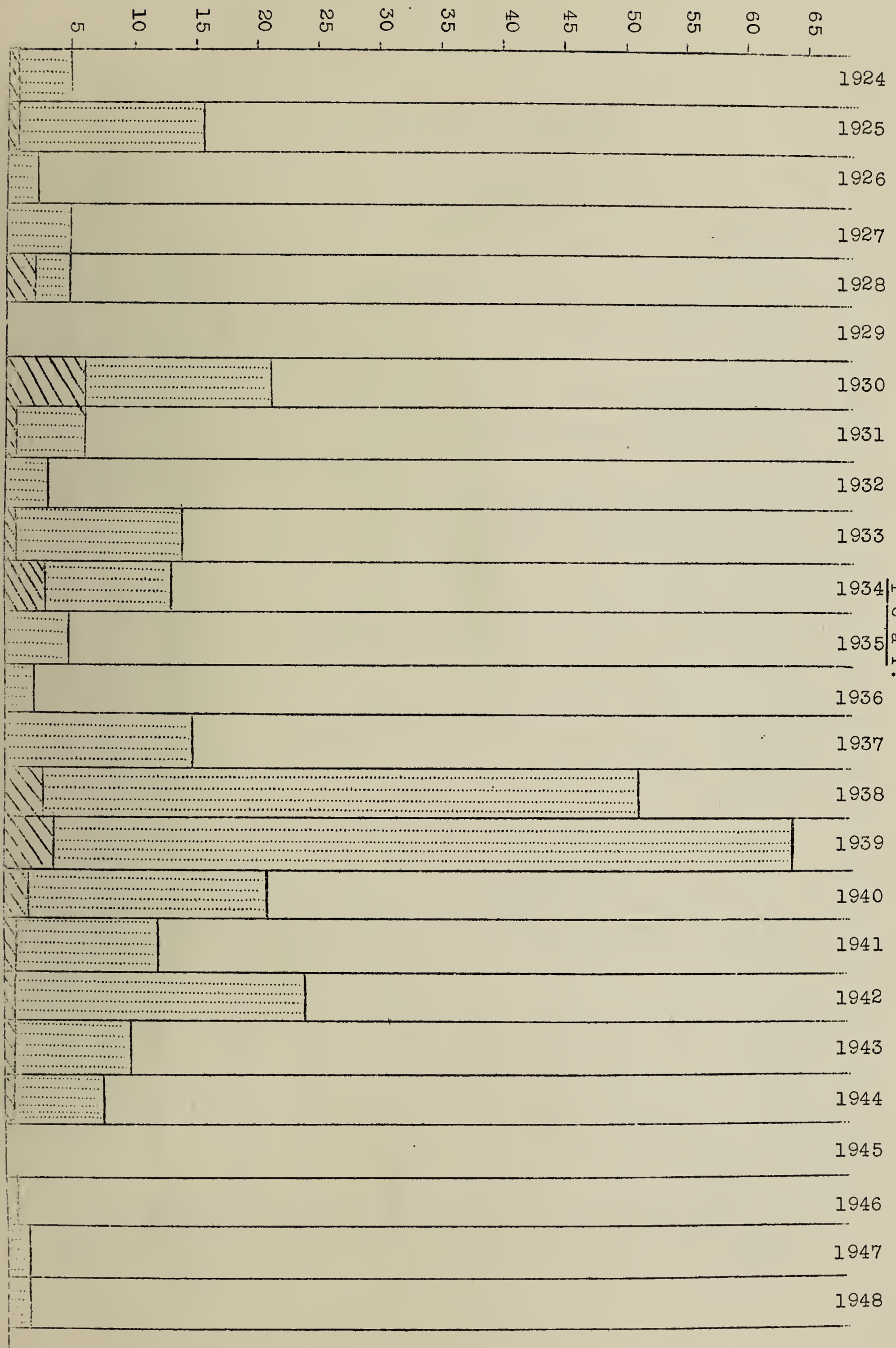
Under 5 years of age	582	-	50%
Over 5 and under 15 years	1556	-	80%

On July 5th the Local Authority handed over the responsibility for the maintenance of Diphtheria Immunisation to the County Council. Fortunately, on account of previous close co-operation, the current scheme was continued and the general public were and probably still are, unaware of the change.

It is now accepted as beyond dispute that the scourge of Diphtheria can be controlled by artificial immunisation. The accompanying histogram clearly shows the trend of the disease in Westhoughton. Up to 1942, it is seen that there were 'good' years, unfortunately only to be followed by severe outbreaks and deaths. During 1942 a scheme for the immunisation of school and pre-school children was inaugurated and has continued to the present time. Since 1944, there have been no deaths on only 5 cases.

If the town is to retain or improve on its present satisfactory relative freedom from diphtheria, the proportion of immunised children must be greatly improved upon - it is to be hoped that we do not have to depend on the real and actual fear of the presence of the disease to stir the more complacent parents.

C a s e s



Cases Notified



Deaths

WESTHOUGHTON URBAN DISTRICT

Causes of Death during the year 1948.

Registrar General's Return

Causes of Death	Males	Females
Measles	1	-
Cerebro-spinal Fever	-	-
Diphtheria	-	-
Influenza	-	-
Tuberculosis of Respiratory System	2	1
Other Tuberculosis	3	-
Cancer	10	18
Diabetes	-	-
Cerebral Haemorrhage	11	10
Heart Disease	31	27
Other Circulatory Diseases	3	2
Bronchitis	10	6
Pneumonia	2	2
Other Respiratory Diseases	2	1
Ulcer of Stomach or Duodenum	1	-
Diarrhoea (under 2 years)	-	-
Syphilitic Diseases	-	-
Appendicitis	-	1
Other Digestive Diseases	1	-
Nephritis	1	2
Acute Polio-myelitis & Polio-encephalitis	-	-
Acute Inf. Encephalitis	-	-
Maternal Causes	-	-
Con. Debility, Premature Birth etc.	1	1
Suicide	-	-
Other Violence & Road Traffic Accidents	2	3
Other defined causes	7	8
Total	88	82

TUBERCULOSIS. New cases and Mortality during 1948.

Years	New cases				Deaths			
	Respiratory		Non-Respiratory		Respiratory		Non-Respiratory	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
0								
1			1	1				
5								
10			1	1				
15							1	
20		1	1					
25							1	
35	3			1	2			
45						1		
55	1	1					1	
65 and upwards	1							
	5	2	3	3	2	1	3	-
Total	7		6		3		3	

NOTIFIABLE DISEASES (OTHER THAN TUBERCULOSIS) DURING THE YEAR 1948. (Notified cases only)

	Cases Notified														Total Deaths	Cases removed to Hospital
	Total cases all ages	Under 1	1 to 2	2 to 3	3 to 4	4 to 5	5 to 10	10 to 15	15 to 20	20 to 25	25 to 35	35 to 45	45 to 65	65 and over		
Smallpox																
Scarlet Fever	44			3	4	3	16	13	4	1						19
Diphtheria	2						1			1						2
Para-Typhoid																
Measles	232	8	22	22	38	52	87	1	1	1					1	3
Whooping Cough	24	3	3	4	4	7	3									1
Pneumonia	11	1	1	2		1	4			2					4	1
Puerperal Pyrexia																
Acute Polio-myelitis																
Cerebro-spinal Fever																
Encephalitis Lethargica																
Ophthalmia Neonatorum	1	1														1
Erysipelas																
Total	314	13	26	31	46	63	111	14	5	4	1	-	-	-	5	27

